

The Fourth Political Theory Alexander Dugin

The fact that Vladimir Putin takes this man seriously is dangerous. There is nothing here.

It is not that this philosopher says anything particularly objectionable. It is that how he says it is entirely unintelligible. He talks about the fourth political theory. There is no theory. That is the essence of the book. It is not there, and yet, there is a great need for a theory. Liberalism, as he correctly points out, does not work. Neither did Communism or Fascism. There needs to be a path forward.

This book doesn't even deign to dance around the question of a coherent philosophy. It is simply vapid, empty, nothing here.

Handing Putin this empty vessel, this vapor in which he can see whatever he chooses, is as dangerous as giving Hitler the German philosophers and romantics such as Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Wagner to draw on. The philosophical underpinning of his aggression against Georgia, Ukraine and the Baltic States seems to be a concept called Eurasianism, one of Dugin's pets.

Nonetheless, in the grand tradition of deconstructionism, reading between the lines, trying to make sense out of a text which makes no sense, I am writing a lengthy review. I am doing this in two parts. This review itself is an overview, a collection of opinions about the work. Because I'm afraid it will be rather tedious, I include chapter summaries as a series of comments.

Dugin's writing style is definitely postmodern. Postmodernists do not believe that the text alone can carry meaning, but rather, it has to be deconstructed. They devalue text. Dugin's text certainly should be devalued. It flows on endlessly, without really saying much.

To add to the confusion, he employs the common philosopher's trope of pretending that a concept can only be well represented in its original language, which he happens to know, and he will attempt for the sake of the unwashed to explain. In German he uses the word Dasein, in Russian narod. Dasein means being, and narod means people. There are nuances in the languages, but let me assure you as a writer who knows German, Russian and French quite well, more is lost in the obscurity of using the foreign words than could possibly be gained through understanding the nuances. In this case, language obfuscates rather than clarifies. It does cultivate a certain reverence for the author's erudition, which I suspect is the major purpose. My English words for the practice include pretense, sophistry, pedantry and rhetoric. The French poseur and the German Luftmensch would not be amiss.

Dugin's bibliography is very extensive. If ever there were an occasion to dismiss dead white males, this is it. They are mostly philosophers. The sociologists and anthropologists he cites did their best work in the 19th century.

Such a narrow limitation might be justified in some contexts. If I were writing a cookbook, you would expect that most of the bibliography would consist of other cookbooks. However, the subject here is the condition of man. Dugin is writing about political orders, how should we manage our lives. The science of what people are, how people act, and how we became the way we are is extraordinarily relevant. Yet, all of the people he cites are other philosophers, people few have ever heard of.

More strongly, Dugin expressly says that he does not believe in science. The opening of Chapter Two begins "Being a supporter of cyclical development, and an opponent of Francis Bacon and his theory of knowledge...."

Francis Bacon was the father of the scientific method - empiricism. The idea is that in science you form a hypothesis, and then you formulate one or more devices to test to see if the hypothesis is true. Using the scientific method, it is possible to immediately disprove some hypotheses, such as "bricks always float." If you cannot disprove it, you increasingly act on the assumption that it might be true, or is probably true, gaining confidence as it stands the test of time.

If you reject Bacon, you not only reject a body of knowledge, you are left without a theory of how you know the things you know. You are free to make it up. This book is an exercise in making it up. Just like Marxism.

Like most pure philosophers, Dugin is working in the realm of nice-sounding but untested hypotheses. Marx had a number of theories about how society is organized (rigid social classes) and how people operate (altruistically). He never put them to a test. When Communism was implemented, it was found that he was radically, gravely wrong on both. Fascists likewise discovered that people don't always put the interest of the state first. Democracy makes the naïve assumptions that people are equal in ability and that they know what is good for themselves. All are wrong in matters of degree. There was ample opportunity for Dugin to say something useful, but he missed it.

Never putting his ideas to the test, Dugin, for instance, is able to believe that racism is bad but ethnos, believing in your own people, is good. His Eurasia theme is based on the notion that peoples within a "civilization" have common interests and should be mutually supportive. A quick mental survey of the real world reveals this to be nonsense. His arguments beg for examples, none of which he provides.

The great danger and Dugin is this his work might be taken as the foundation for political philosophy by the likes of Vladimir Putin. It has never been tested - it is only a collection of ideas that might look good on paper. To rush them into practice without testing them is the heart of folly. Yet, it is exactly that kind of folly which ushered in Communism and Fascism in the 20th century, and almost every lame brained school reform in history. One must be wary.

It is as if a vast number witch doctors all wrote books on how to cure patients of their various ills. They all reference one another's increasingly fantastic descriptions of incantations and potions, but none of them reference actual patient cases, and none have a track record of curing anything. So why should we

believe philosophers who do nothing except quote other philosophers? Philosophy has to be tied to real life.

Dugin doesn't have a thing to say about the evolutionary psychologists, sociobiologists, geneticists and other living scientists who are investigating what man is and how he came to be the way he is. Dennett, Dawkins, E. O. Wilson, Pinker, Ridley and Nicholas Wade are nowhere to be found. These are the scientists who have earned their wings expanding the realm of human knowledge and gone on to write a bit of philosophy. They earned their place on the podium from which they can talk with authority about the nature of man. Moreover, the average literate person has actually heard of some of them.

Contrast this with the pure philosophers of our age, people like Richard Rorty, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault and now Dugin. They refer mainly to each other. Each has a hard core of advocates - it would not be amiss to call them nuts, like Marx' Bolsheviks - who absolutely revere them. However, the mainstream thinkers, and academics, don't know or care who they are. This obscurity is merited. These people haven't contributed anything lasting to the world of ideas. They contribute conflicting opinions, but opinions without substance, opinions that cannot be validated, but can only be argued in coffee houses amongst the navel-gazing circle of philosophers.

What about the ideas in the book? Here are some of the major themes.

The world has seen three major political theories since the Enlightenment: liberalism, Communism and Fascism. They appeared in that order and are disappearing in reverse order. Dugin sweepingly writes that liberalism exalts the individual, Communism the social class, and Fascism the state. Even in theory that is an oversimplification. In actuality, with which Dugin rarely troubles himself, the latter two have only been implemented as dictatorships. His definition of liberalism embraces every manifestation from Hayek and Friedman's libertarianism to modern state socialism.

The key features of liberalism, per Dugin, are that it is all about the individual, not the state, the people, or presumably family. Tribes and races are irrelevant, and have no claim on the individual. People own private property, and they are bound, even in government, by contract. Free markets dominate.

Liberalism has expanded into globalization. Dugin universally condemns globalization. To me this means a global marketplace for goods, both tangible and intangible, services, media and cultural artefacts. I searched the book in vain for a similar description by Dugin. Anyhow, to him it is bad. It is bad mainly because it is driven by the archfiend of the unipolar world (two of his words), America.

This is one of many areas in which I long to agree with Dugin, but find nothing concrete to which I can say, "Yes!" I resent that the traditional fairy tales have been replaced by Disney; that my neighbors' kids are learning English by watching the awful TV show Monster High; that manufacturing is having a hard time getting a foothold in Ukraine because the Chinese do it so cheaply, and Western banks make credit difficult. Why couldn't Dugin come up with such a list himself, to illustrate the ills of globalization?

Dugin celebrates the narod (народ - Russian for people, folk, ethnicity, any of which terms would work just fine) and the civilization. Here he uses Huntington's categorization of civilizations: Western (US, Canada, Western Europe), Chinese, Japanese, Islamic, Indian, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American and African. His vaunted Eurasia, the counterweight to America and the EU, has the Slavic-Orthodox civilization at its center. He forces himself into two tight spots.

First, he posits that there is a commonality of interest within each civilization. He fails to notice that the one civilization which seems to have united, the European Union, is fraying badly. He also ignores the fact that the other unions seem stillborn. Arab countries are wary of each other. Latin American countries still nurse grudges dating back to the 19th century War of the Pacific and War of the Triple Alliance. The Chinese and Vietnamese are at each other's throats, and his own Eurasia is having great difficulty pulling itself together even as a weak customs union of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia.

Ukraine has made it abundantly clear it wants no part of Russia, especially not being part of Russia. That has been done before, and it was miserable. Perhaps as a sop to Putin, Dugin writes "The Western border of the Eurasianist civilisation goes somewhat more East of the Western border of the Ukraine , making that newly-formulated government a fortiori fragile and not viable."

Most of Ukraine speaks Russian, it is true. Just like English in Ireland, it was forced on them. Many Ukrainians were exiled to the Russian Far East, where they had to speak it. Quite a few Russians were resettled in Ukraine. Moreover, Russian is a world language, like it or not.

Language is not a reliable measure of the people's sentiment. Their national symbols are a better indication. Ukraine's symbol is the Cossack, fighting against all odds to be free. Russia's is the bear, smothering everything in its tyrannical embrace. Russia's attempts to Russify Ukraine first by charm, then starvation and then dilution have all failed. Today, even the eastern oblasts, what Putin wants to call "New Russia," are showing little enthusiasm for Putin's attempt to force it into Russia proper through the terrorism of the "little green men," Russian soldiers without insignia and mercenaries he has smuggled over the border. No, the border of Eurasia, if such exists, runs along Ukraine's eastern border.

One of Dugin's intellectual comrades in arms, and a man who has written something intelligible, is Alain de Benoist. I give a good review to his [\[\[ASIN:1907166165 The Problem of Democracy\]\]](#). Tellingly, de Benoist supports the opinion that Ukraine is its own country and ought to be left alone.

The second point he misses is that the named civilizations map more or less to races, which he would like to pretend don't exist. [\[\[ASIN:1594204462 Nicholas Wade\]\]](#), tracing the evolution of man, says that all other races split from the Africans 50,000 years ago; Europeans from Asians 30,000, Amerindians from Asians 15,000 years back, and Indians and Semitic peoples from Europeans about the time of the agricultural revolution, the Japanese from Chinese somewhat more recently. Per [\[\[ASIN:0465020429 Harpending and Cochran\]\]](#), evolution has been especially rapid in the last 10,000 years, resulting in differences in physiognomy, temperament and other mental qualities among the different

"civilizations." If you catch the drift of the previous sentence, I can narrow down which civilization you might belong to. If you are offended, I know exactly which one. Anyhow, peoples, however you choose to label them, think differently.

The book ends with a whimper. Without ever saying what he is for, Dugin lamely concludes the book with a paragraph about what he is against: "But there are some who think otherwise. Who are aligned against such a project? Those who want to impose uniformity, the one (American) way of life, One World. And their methods are force, temptation, and persuasion. They are against multipolarity. So they are against us."

As promised, I will add comments detailing the chapters.

Chapter notes

As promised, here is a chapter-by-chapter summary of the book. It includes many quotes. Though it may appear otherwise, I have attempted to select the most lucid, the most meaningful paragraphs to include.

Chapter 1, The birth of the concept.

Dugin starts off with "The Fourth Political Theory is a 'crusade' against:

1. postmodernity,
2. the post-industrial society,
3. liberal thought realised in practice,
4. and globalisation, as well as its its logistical and technological bases.

He writes that "The Fourth Political Theory must draw its 'dark inspiration' from postmodernity.... Postmodernity and its conditions (the globalist world, governance or 'micromanagement', the market society, the universalism of human rights, 'the real domination of capital', and so on) represent the main object of the Fourth Political Theory. However, they are radically negated as values in themselves.

To me it is interesting that he does not propose to talk about demography, evolution, genetics, technology or finance. Several members of his loose camp, Guillaume Faye and Alain de Benoist, have published good books on these subjects.

The liberal world's inability to reproduce itself is leading to a rapid demise. The traditional populations are growing old, and there is not enough of the native stock in the rising generations to replace them. To the extent there are young people, they are coming from Africa, the Muslim world and Latin America. Just about every country in the first of Dugin's named civilizations, the America-centric world, is drowning in debt and failing miserably to pass on its values. Dugin has no need to posit a fight against the west – it is falling of its own weight.

Recent work in evolution and genetics, brought together in Nicholas Wade's "A Troublesome Inheritance," indicate that world populations, Dugin's "civilizations," differ greatly in temperament. Their differences are more than merely cultural. American liberalism will not saturate the world because the rest of the world is not temperamentally in sync with America. Dugin should note America's frustration in attempting to make inroads in the Arab world. They parallel Russia's earlier frustration in the same areas.

Dugin does not talk about technology and communication. Among other things, it has vastly enhanced communication throughout the world. Countries no longer have the cloak of darkness to hide the way in which they treat their citizens, or others. The misdeeds of both the CIA/NSA and the FSB are there for the world to see.

Lastly, he does not talk about employment. The West has moved beyond the industrial workplace envisioned by Marx. The upshot is that there is more and more demand for intelligent and educated workers, whereas there is increasingly less place in the world for dull and uneducated workers. The above-mentioned work in evolution and genetics confirms the observations dating back to the Greeks that there are substantial differences among people and peoples in terms of ability. Communism and liberalism both profoundly reject this notion on ideological grounds. Nevertheless, in the words of American founding father John Adams, "Facts are stubborn things; and whatever may be our wishes, our inclinations, or the dictates of our passion, they cannot alter the state of facts and evidence." This is part of the crisis of liberalism. Dugin can't devise a meaningful new politics if he also refuses to see the truth.

For many people in the world, there is literally nothing they can do with their labor that is of economic value. One sees them standing on the streets of Haiti, Africa, the Middle East, even Europe and America. Many more face an existential crisis. The value of their labor is so minimal, their potential contribution to society so negligible, that they find no meaning in life. They turn to drugs, alcohol and other diversions and simply drop out. Supported by a generous welfare state, these two classes of people produce succeeding generations just like themselves, letting the more capable pay for it, in many cases not having children of their own. Unless the fourth politics can address the hard questions of employment, fertility and socialization, it cannot offer an answer.

Chapter 2 – Dasein as an Actor

Dasein translates as Being or Essence. The chapter title makes no sense in German or English. Dugin writes "The historical subject is neither an individual, nor class, nor the state, nor race. This is the anthropological and the historical axiom of the Fourth Political Theory. We assumed that it is clear." Note to Dugin: it is clear as mud.

Dugin condemns the racism of the Nazis. As always, he talks in abstractions. He gives no concrete examples, not even a mention of the Jews. Again, he writes: "Clearly highlighting the main trajectory for

the rejection of all forms and varieties of **racism**, including **the biological theories** inherent in National Socialism, we can identify what the Fourth Political Theory may borrow from it."

When he introduces the term, he says that racism assumes a rank-order, a superior race. The Nazis did this. But, he later rejects America's tendency to project its values as global as "racist." If anything, America goes out of its way to denigrate its Enlightenment history and promote other values, especially the African ones which have come to dominate its popular culture. He is gloriously inconsistent. By his definition, America is *prima facie* racist just by being itself, and every other culture must be as well.

He claims that globalization is racism, the notion that the West has the answer. As I note elsewhere, he never defines globalization, and is mute on the subject that today's primary beneficiary is China, not the West.

Having condemned racism, he goes on to write that "**Ethnos** is the greatest value of the Fourth Political Theory as a cultural phenomenon; as a community of language, religious belief, daily life, and the sharing of resources and goals." Here we have a contradiction – ethnicity marks groups of people within a race. It is the same kind of group identification, just at a lower level. Arguing in favor of ethnos is sophistry. It also raises the question of how can Dugin value the ethnos, yet not value the Ukrainians?

It is a fact of life that no politician can tell the truth. No constitution can afford to recognize truths about the electorate. The American constitution dodged the issues of factions (political parties), the limitations of the common man, race. Dugin likewise cannot be candid about race. Ethnos and race are two sides of the same coin. Like any politician, he cannot afford to tell the truth about the electorate. Americans have a precise term. A Kinsley gaffe is saying something which is absolutely true but cannot be said.

Dugin's characterization of liberals, communists and fascists is superficially true: individual, class and state. The individual has triumphed in ways (gay rights, abortion) that do not matter. Class needs were somewhat satisfied under Communism (pensions, equal pay). Fascism may have been the most honest; the state and the politicians were the same.

As far as how leaders are selected, they all deceive themselves. All pretend(ed) to support democracy. None did in practice. How far they strayed from representative government depended on the nature of the people being governed, the technologies of the times, and personalities.

Dugin critiques the theory of communism based on his experience with the practice. What was called Communism worked in Russia because it was a totalitarian system imposed on a country used to autocrats. That may also be why, to Dugin's continually expressed wonder, it did not work in the West.

Of freedom he writes "The difference is that this freedom is conceived as human freedom, not as freedom for the individual — as the freedom given by ethnocentrism and the freedom of Dasein, the

freedom of culture and the freedom of society, and the freedom for any form of subjectivity except for that of an individual." More on this later; search for "freedom to" below.

Chapter 3. A Critique of Monotonic Progress

Dugin's first error is to call English philosopher Herbert Spencer a liberal. Liberals loathe social Darwinism. His second error is to deny its effect. Evolution has been active within historical time. Gregory Clark of UC Davis has traced the decline of violence, the increase in intelligence, and the increase in general wealth in England over the past 1000 years. Wade cites him and others in "A Troubled Inheritance" Dugin appears wholly ignorant of, and therefore rejects, science. A philosophy has to fit human beings as they are, and it is the function of science to describe them.

Dugin claims that Ayn Rand was wrong to equate rich with good. She was not so direct. Rather, wealth is generally a reflection of innate ability, and society considers wealth to be good. Moral quality and intelligence are not the same, though Pinker (in *The Better Angels of our Nature*) shows that they are related.

Globalization is not a matter of rich vs. poor, all or none, but of optimization. One of globalization's many problems is externalities that are not paid for. Another is the damage to the ethnos. There must be world trade. Dugin is naïve to assume otherwise. As a trivial example, Russia is the world's major source for palladium, an essential mineral in car manufacturing. It certainly makes sense to trade for it. The hard question is, how much globalization, and how will it be done? San Marino will not soon manufacture iPads for a domestic market. They need to trade. The question is one of degree. How much of the essence of San Marino can they trade away for iPads and Mercedes.

Russia was historically quite self-sufficient, almost uniquely so. For instance, peasants made their own wooden tools rather than import metal. Russia does not need Mercedes. If Dugin's rejection of globalization would work anywhere, it is Russia. He should not even talk about the rest of the world until he has a plan for the fatherland.

To repeat, a major question not answered is that the world has too many people, too few skills, and not enough work. Owing to different abilities, many cannot work. Hunting and gathering and subsistence farming are no longer viable with increased populations. What now?

Dugin writes *"In terms of its methodological base, the Fourth Political Theory must be rooted in the fundamental rejection of the monotonic process. That is to say, the Fourth Political Theory must assert that the monotonic process is unscientific, inadequate, amoral, and untrue as its future axiom (without specifying how the monotonic process must be rejected)."*

This makes no sense. Calling a process amoral makes no sense. It is like calling digestion or photosynthesis immoral.

Secondly, life is full of monotonic processes. Scientific knowledge increases monotonically. We learn more than we forget. Written history is a monotone: it gets longer every year. In technology, electronic devices monotonically follow Moore's Law, doubling in capacity about every 18 months. In biology life has gotten more complex over time. About humans, our cranial capacity has increased monotonically since we split from monkeys. And, to directly contradict Dugin, our societies have become more and more complex as our brains have grown.

Dugin sides with romantics such as Emile Durkheim and Jared Diamond, in rejecting the idea of progress. Bluntly put, however, progress is what has worked. Hunter-gatherers are increasingly rare because their way of life does not work as well as others. Dugin may claim that to judge is racism. However, regardless of his opinion, societies will continue to evolve, and complexity seems to be favored..

Dugin's list of the crimes of liberalism is infantile, jejune. The atom bomb? The decline of the American Indian? No it is simply how evolution works. Neanderthals are extinct because they could not compete with Homo Sapiens, and the Indians' hunter-gatherer way of life cannot compete against modernity. True, the US did start many unnecessary wars. Don't call it liberalism. In every age, the political class running the leading countries tends to start wars. Liberalism, belief in the individual, may be something evil, but it is a different evil.

Chapter 4, the Reversability of Time

Dugin cherishes the idea of the reversability of time. Like many things, he never defines it. Some primitive peoples, such as the Kayapo Indians with whom I have spent some time, used to believe in cyclical time. That was before their contact with the white man. Now, for better or worse, they must deal with linear time.

They say that history never repeats itself, but it rhymes. Even with the fall of Rome, Roman developments remained. We don't forget. History and knowledge increase monotonically.

5. Global Transition

This chapter makes a little sense.

Dugin claims that America defines the standards for the world, whether through direct domination or co-opting. Other states all react, in some form or another. There is no cohesion in their reaction.

The United States employs a double standard. Its friends, such as Saudi Arabia, are not held to the standards of democracy, equality, fair courts and the like. Other countries such as Russia are held to different standards.

There has been an absurd growth of the financial sector, divorced from real production

6. Conservatism and postmodernity

After a lucid chapter, understandable though it says nothing profound, Dugin falls back into the mire. He quotes every philosopher in history without telling us what they said. Conservatism, to him, is conserving backwards practices. He might give some examples? Wooden farm tools? Amish buggies?

He categorizes types of conservatism.

Fundamental conservatism

Islam is conservative – it wants to preserve Sharia law, tradition. Jerry Falwell wanted to preserve a literal interpretation of the Bible. They do not critique all of modernity, but mainly the falling away from God. He cites a schism among the old believers in Russia. Should they set themselves apart with checkered trousers, or is that too conspicuous?

Liberal conservatism.

He first mentions Edmund Burke, who would endorse liberal changes, but with a "go slow" caveat. He somehow groups the simulacra (wannabes) of Bin Laden and Che Guevara in this group.

Conservative Revolution

He creates a taxonomy of philosophies. Doesn't tell us what they would do, only what they believe. It is all castles in the air. He does not answer what difference believing one over the others would make.

Eurasianism

He talks again to Eurasianism, claiming that modernity is a transient phase, one which exists only in the west. The rest of the world must abandon western values and build their own.

Neo-Eurasianism

He goes off the deep end, and I don't understand a word. It is a jumble of blather about Marx, Foucault, Derrida and others. .

This man doesn't use paragraphs to separate thoughts. The thoughts are not distinct, a mere flow of words, each page a wall of words. This obscurantism characterizes, however, the founding documents of Islam, communism, and postmodernism. It can be dangerous. Like the Bible, the text can be deconstructed to impute to its author a justification of any end. As we observe in the case of Ukraine. There is not a word in the document about domination, but Putin wants to use Dugin to justify his conquest of Ukraine.

7. Civilization as an ideological concept.

What is civilization? Is it culture, or something different? Are their hierarchies? What does one have to do and believe to belong?

Dugin claims that civilization itself is an enlightenment concept. He uses the Russian term *narodi*, (народи – see, I can be pretentious as well) when peoples or folk would work perfectly adequate. It is pretentious book.

Dugin says civilization doesn't do away with savagry and violence, but drives them internally. To me this claim makes no sense, and he offers no evidence. He says that civilization leads to genocides and other ills.

No – it is just a matter of increased scale. Stephen Pinker, in "The Better Angels of our Nature," shows that primitive man is much more bloodthirsty than modern man. We moderns, however, have larger populations and better engines of destruction. Our wars kill smaller fractions of the population, but larger overall numbers. Machines of war make the killing more effective. Note, for instance, how scrupulously modern western armies attempt to avoid civilian casualties.

People have changed genetically under civilization. We are "tamer." While it is true that elements of our more savage past remain in the gene pool, they are less common. The shift is not a categorical change but a qualitative one. Nevertheless, a very rapid one by the standards of evolutionary time. Those civilizations that have been "domesticated" the longest generally are the most tame. They have fewer murders and violent crimes per capita, among other things.

The contrast between civilization and barbarity is becoming even more clear today, as Western Europe falls to immigrants from other civilizations, and Africa succumbs to its tribalism. Nothing has been forgotten, and we have constant reminders. Dugin is adopting one of the shallower pretenses of liberalism, one that is patently untrue.

The universality of civilization is Sir Arthur Keith's topic. But it did not become all-or-nothing until the 20th century. At that point it proves unworkable, a zero-sum game. If all peoples of the world fall under the same ethical umbrella, it is the same as no umbrella. Except, to the detriment of those who devise the universal morality, for those civilizations that choose to take advantage of it rather than adopt it.

Dugin raises a straw-man argument. Russia was never presented by liberals as barbarous. It has been correctly called commercially underdeveloped, yes. But Russian civilization has always been respected in the west.

Dugin conflates the existence of concurring opinions within in the West with propaganda. No – propaganda is from state organs. Western academics are guilty of groupthink, but it is not controlled by the government. A part of the problem of the West is that academics have become more prevalent in government, and they bring the errors of their thinking with them.

Samuel Huntington didn't claim to introduce civilization as an ideological concept. It is a taxonomy, a grouping that makes sense, a superset, generally, above nations. As noted elsewhere, it coincides with

Wade's five major racial groups. Dugin is right in ratifying Huntington: liberalism was interpreted differently by each civilization.

Fukayama advanced "democratic means of governance." Democracy is only superficially the same throughout the world; each civilization (say I) interprets it differently. Nowhere, however, is the common man much in charge. The common man is not capable of governing himself, and power structures everywhere ensure that he does not have the opportunity. His voice is filtered, homogenized and muffled by every system of government. Another challenge which Dugin does not even mention is how to modify or replace democracy. "One man, one vote" is a powerful concept, attractive everywhere, implemented nowhere. He needs his own sophistry to interpret it or replace it.

Dugin writes the following, which makes no sense to me: *"The marking out of civilisation as the foundational subject, pole and actor of contemporary world politics is the most promising ideological approach, Civilisation as a concept construed in the contemporary philosophical context proves to be the centre of a new ideology. This ideology can be described as multi-polarity."*

The opposition to globalism must be an opposition to global markets. But people in every country overwhelmingly vote with their purses and choose the lowest price products. Anti-globalism must entail doing without. There are no volunteers.

Dugin writes of regional globalization, unification of countries and narodi. This smacks of a guise for Russian imperialism, the claim that there is a single Slavic narod. He mentions the German "customs union." It is no coincidence this is the name Putin favors for Belarus-Kazakhstan and (he wishes) Ukraine.

Using another term for civilization, he writes that *"The 'large space' differs from other existing national governments precisely in that it is built on the foundation of a common value system and historical kinship, and it also unifies a few or even a multitude of different governments, tied together by a 'community of fate'. In various large spaces, the integrating factor can vary; somewhere it will be religion; somewhere ethnic origin; somewhere, cultural form; somewhere, the sociopolitical type; somewhere, geographic position."*

The only existing "large space" is the European Union, which is having its difficulties at the moment.

Attempting to justify a larger Russian sphere of influence, he writes *"By Slavic-Orthodox civilisation it is more accurate to understand Eurasian civilisation, to which belong historically, organically and culturally not only the Slavs and not only the Orthodox, but also other ethnicities (including the Turks, Caucasians, Siberians, and so on) and a significant portion of the population professing Islam."*

and

"There are no existing barriers at all to the integration of the Eurasian expanse around Russia, inasmuch as these zones were politically, culturally, economically, socially and psychologically united during the course of many centuries. The Western border of the Eurasianist civilisation goes somewhat more East of the Western border of the Ukraine, making that newly-formulated government a fortiori fragile and not viable."

Yes, the barrier to the integration of the Eurasian expanse is historical antipathy towards the historical hegemon, Russia. The countries' common interests would need to outweigh their apprehension of Russia. Russia has proven to be a bad neighbor, breaking contracts, stirring up domestic trouble, and invading. Iran and Syria, two countries at serious odds with the West, currently find it convenient to be aligned with Russia. This in no way represents a perpetual communality of interests.

In saying this, we should also note that the other "large spaces" will also not likely coalesce due to historical and present enmities:

Spanish speaking South America

Arab speaking countries

China and Vietnam

Chapter 8 The Transformation of the Left in the Twenty-first Century

Dugin makes a fairly good survey of modern political scene. It is descriptive, not prescriptive.

He names the orthodox communists, which he calls also National Gauchists – Venezuela, Cuba, Vietnam and perhaps Bolivia and Peru. They are certainly not western. They are repressive and poor. Can we judge them as unsuccessful, or is that judgment colored by a liberal worldview?

He speaks of the new Left, whose program is antiglobalization. He says their platform is the most well articulated. He cites support for the notion from sociologists – Weber, Boas, Saussure, and Levi-Strauss. Note that they are all very long dead. He goes on to cite lots of obscure French philosophers, Rousseau chief among them. Like Dugin, Rousseau had lots of attractive ideas without much grounding in reality. An appreciation of reality the essential advantage of the English such as Burke and Locke. Dugin is in the French tradition – he builds castles in the air.

Again I (not Dugin) ask, "What is globalism?" It applies to goods, media, and culture. One cannot stop it. Even the Kayapo in the heart of the Amazon rain forest take what they can of battery-powered video games, fishing gear, and Brazilian dance music. Globalization seems inevitable.

Dugin writes of "Freeing up the 'creative potential of the masses.'" This is a myth. People have much more time today than ever before, but they spend it watching TV. We were more creative in the repressive 19th century. Whatever creative potential is there is now being realized. Problem is, there isn't that much, or more likely, hardship, which we have done away with, is the key to unlocking it.

9 Liberalism and its Metamorphoses

Dugin's defining paragraph is:

'Liberalism is the evil fate of human civilisation.' The battle with it, opposition to it, and refutation of its poisonous dogmas — this is the moral imperative of all honest people on the planet. At all costs, we must, argumentatively and thoroughly, again and again, repeat that truth, even when to do so seems useless, untimely, politically incorrect, and sometimes even dangerous.

- *The understanding of the individual as the measure of all things;*
- *Belief in the sacred character of private property;*
- *The assertion of the equality of opportunity as the moral law of society;*
- *Belief in the 'contractual' basis of all sociopolitical institutions, including governmental;*
- *The abolition of any governmental, religious and social authorities who lay claim to 'the common truth';*
- *The separation of powers and the making of social systems of control over any government institution whatsoever;*
- *The creation of a civil society without races, peoples and religions in place of traditional governments;*
- *The dominance of market relations over other forms of politics (the thesis: 'economics is fate'); Certainty that the historical path of Western peoples and countries is a universal model of development and progress for the entire world, which must, in an imperative order, be taken as the standard and pattern.*

He differentiates Freedom from (which he calls liberty) and freedom to (simply freedom). He includes Hayek among the liberals; his definition is more of libertarians. He writes, "*'Freedom from' is the most disgusting formula of slavery, inasmuch as it tempts man to an insurrection against God, against traditional values, against the moral and spiritual foundations of his people and his culture.*"

My observation is that social processes always run to extremes. Political philosophy attempts to define an ideal end state, a utopia. This can never be, for people continue to evolve and society remains in flux. The question for the political philosopher, the Fourth Political Theory, should instead be, what is next?

Dugin, somewhat correctly, speaks of postmodern liberalism. I don't agree with his list of its traits, but he is right that liberalism had to evolve. Once again, evolution is the constant.

10. The ontology of the future

This chapter is a parade of dead white males!!! Husserl's long winded, meaningless rant on the future. Of course we cannot know the future no matter how we dissect it. However, it will evolve.

A bit of history – defunct civilizations – would be useful. Dugin offers not a word on the Greeks, Romans, Hittites, Mongols and others, to give an insight of how futures evolved from past civilizations.

11. The new political anthropology

Dugin has an immense view of the role of politics. We are social beings to him means that we are political beings. This is either a tautology, or it is wrong. This is a dangerous error, to pervert the word politics.

He writes "*What man is, is derived not from himself as an individual, but from politics. It is politics, being the dispositive of violence and legitimate power, that defines the man.*"

He loves the term "rhizomic," the silly invention of a couple of Frenchmen. In botany it is a mass of roots in a plant like an iris. In his context Wikipedia says that "Deleuze and Guattari use the terms "rhizome" and "rhizomatic" to describe theory and research that allows for multiple, non-hierarchical entry and exit points in data representation and interpretation."

I am a data guy, a computer guy, and this paragraph does not compute. Whaaaaat?

He does say something useful. He claims that the liberals' fears, taking the form of fascists, is a complete parody. They died in 1945. He is right for once. Interesting that Fascists are a central element in the Russian propaganda now engulfing Ukraine.

12. Fourth political practice

He writes that "The adherents of the Fourth Political Theory are in need of a plan." Then ... Dugin immediately goes into a long discourse on the Greek and Roman terms for the word "thing" -- pragma and res. His whole chapter is filled with navel gazing. What are you going to do??

This is his key paragraph – which means nothing!

The point is that if we talk about the very core of the Fourth Political Theory and its fundamental problems, we understand that the main idea of the Fourth Political Theory is to walk away from the dualism between the subject and the object, between intention and realisation, and from the dual topography which the philosophy of modernity, the science of modernity, and the politology of modernity are based on.

He uses two German words, inzwishen which means precisely "inbetween" and Dasein, which means being, or essence. There is nothing magic about the words, and he uses them to say nothing.

13. Gender in the fourth political theory

Dugin not mentioned up until now. Every author he cites seems to be a dead white male. Now, because women must be accommodated, we have page upon page of reference to obscure authors.

He doesn't address any of what seem to be the key questions for women: work, abortion, marriage and divorce. He certainly does not address the needs of society to bear and socialize children.

14. Against the postmodern world

He writes of the Evil of Unipolarity. "*The American Empire should be destroyed. And at one point, it will be.*"

I ask, why not wait for it to collapse, like the Soviet Union, the Romans and others? It seems to be happening. Dugin certainly overrates the power of America. It is increasingly run by political hacks. It has a political process oriented around television, which seems guaranteed to elect good-looking empty suits.

He writes "*The only thing that we insist on in creating such a pact of cooperation is to put aside anti-Communist, as well as anti-fascist, prejudices.*" That is interesting, given his previous anti-Fascist rhetoric. Ironic that Russian propaganda seems obsessed with Fascists, which exist only as a figment of Putin's imagination.

National Bolshevism is claimed to be similar to the Fourth Political Theory, but he never defines it. This is for insiders. You gotta know in order to know.

And, the less-than-stirring concluding paragraph of the whole book:

But there are some who think otherwise. Who are aligned against such a project? Those who want to impose uniformity, the one (American) way of life, One World. And their methods are force, temptation, and persuasion. They are against multipolarity. So they are against us.
